Release of Special Fund for Repairing of National Highways in Bihar

4222. SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that most of the National Highways in Bihar are in very bad shape which are damaging not only vehicles but also resulting in excess consumption of petroleum products;

(b) the total amount sanctioned and released for repairing these highways during 1996-97 and 1997-98;

(c) whether Government propose to release special funds an emergent basis to Bihar for repairing the roads on priority basis;

(d) if not, the reasons therefore and the action Government propose to take to improve the condition of roads in Bihar; and

(e) by when the repairing work is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN): (a) to (e) National Highways in Bihar are being kept in traffic worthy condition within the available resources. A sum of Rs. 24.35 crores was allotted for the maintenance and repairs of these National Highways during 1996-97. During 1997-98, an amount of Rs. 4.12 crores has already been released for the maintenance/ repairs. Further for developmental works, the tentative allocation for 1997-98 is Rs. 20.5 crores.

Maintenance and repairs of National Highways is a continuous process. Work of ordinary repairs and periodic renewals are done on regular basis and restoration of monsoon damages and other special repairs are taken up as and when necessary.

Delhi Police Request for Exemption of Pillion Riders from wearing Helmet

4223. SHRI BRAHMAKUMAR BHATT: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Delhi Police has requested exempting pillion riders from wearing helmets;

(b) whether the request is in contravention of the provisions of the Motor Vehicle Act of 1993;

(c) whether this issue is pending with the Delhi High Court which has *inter-alia* asked the Delhi Police and Delhi State Government to specify the quality of the helmets;

(d) if so, the attempts made by the Bureau of Indian Standards in this regard; and

(e) the efforts made by Government for the implementation of the Motor Vehicle Act?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN): (a) No, Sir. However, the Delhi Traffic Police had sought a clarification from the State Transport Authority that whether the State Government intends to exempt certain class of vehicles or any person or class of persons or to make such exemptions as the State Government may think fit under the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988/Delhi Motor Vehicles Rules, 1993.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Delhi Police has informed that the matter is sub-judice in the Delhi High Court.

(d) The Bureau of Indian Standards has already specified standards for helmets vide No. "IS:4151:1993 Protective Helmets for Motorcycle riders."

(e) Necessary provisions have already been provided in the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 and the State Governments have been advised from time to time to strictly enforce the same.